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SUBJECT: PLAN COLOMBIA IMPLEMENTATION ROUND-UP, APRIL, 2005

1. (U) The following is an update of Plan Colombia activities reported during April, 2005.

DOJ/JSRP

2. (U) DOJ continued to provide training and technical assistance through the Justice Sector Reform Program (JSRP), in particular to develop the criminal justice sector during the transition to the new accusatory system. Thirty members of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) visited Bogota as part of an exchange with the Colombian Institute for Legal Medicine. The following DOJ training programs also took place in April:

-- The two-week "Investigator As a Witness" course was offered in Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Bucaramanga, Villavicencio, Tunja, and Yopal to 780 police investigators. The course used practical exercises and classroom presentations to focus on crime scene management, report writing, interview techniques and testimony in court.

-- The two-week "Criminal Trial Advocacy" course was offered in Medellin and Cali to 120 prosecutors and 60 police investigators. The course used classroom presentations and mock trials presided over by Colombian judges to focus on prosecution strategy, developing and presenting evidence, the new criminal procedure code, police and prosecutor cooperation, preliminary hearings, and trial techniques.

-- The one-week "Criminal Trial Advocacy: Judges" course was offered in Medellin to 50 judges. The course used classroom presentations and mock trials to focus on the new criminal procedure code, the role of the judge in an accusatory system, handling evidence, and presiding over proceedings.

-- The two-week "Patrol Officer Training" course was offered in Cali and Tunja to 70 Colombian National Police (CNP) officers. The course trained the officers as instructors. The officers will train patrol officers in the new criminal procedure code, and the accusatory system.

-- The one-week "Leadership for Judicial Police" course was offered in Bogota to 30 police officers. The course focused on improving leadership skills for police commanders and unit chiefs.

-- The one-week "Anti-Corruption" course, focusing on institutional transparency, was offered to 30 judicial police supervisors and unit commanders from the CNP, Department of Administrative Security (DAS) and Cuerpo Tecnico de Investigaciones (CTI).

-- The one-week "Intellectual Property" course was offered to 30 police investigators and prosecutors. The course used classroom presentations and case studies presented by U.S. and Colombian instructors to focus on copyright and trademark law, the connection between piracy and terrorism, and the identification of counterfeit music and DVD movies.

-- The two-week "Anti-Kidnapping" course was offered by the JSRP and the FBI, in coordination with the office of the Vice President, to 36 prosecutors and investigators from the National Anti-Kidnapping Unit and seven regional anti-kidnapping units. The course used classroom presentations, mock crime scene investigation and mock trials to focus on investigation and prosecution strategy in kidnapping cases, crime scene and evidence management, interview techniques, and presentation of evidence and testimony in court.

MILGROUP

3. (U) Several U.S.-funded civil affairs construction projects in conflict areas are nearing completion. In the next two months, the following projects will be inaugurated: a school in Sumapaz; clinics in Aracaraua, Ortega and Valencia; a rehab center for mine-injured civilians in Caqueta; and a day care center for Downs Syndrome children in Planadas. On May 21, the Ambassador inaugurated a library in San Vicente de Caguan. These facilities are located in former FARC-controlled areas, and demonstrate a GOC presence with Colombian Military (COLMIL) personnel.

14. (U) Vice Minister of Defense (VMOD) Jorge Mario Eastman Robledo asked MILGROUPE and the Ambassador to intervene in five Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases being managed by the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM) related to the modification or acquisition of UH-60 aircraft. Eastman noted that AMCOM failed to: deliver pricing and availability data after repeated requests, cut contracts, cut partial contracts without customer notification, implement amendments, and meet promised timelines. MILGROUPE will send details of the cases to SOUTHCOM and ask for General Officer assistance in resolving them.

NAS

15. (U) On April 14, GOC forces repelled an attack by 300-400 members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) on the town of Toribio, Cauca Department. The 82 members of the town's Municipal Police detachment were among the first armed and equipped under the Plan Colombia Reinsertion of Police in Conflictive Zones program. The police were able to hold back the FARC until GOC rapid response elements arrived, including the Mobile Rural Police (Caribineros) and Antinarcotics Police Airmobile Squadron (Jungla) troops. Both the Caribineros and the Junglas also train under Plan Colombia programs.

RSO

16. (U) Anti-Kidnapping Initiative (AKI): The ninth CRT course will begin in mid-June and be completed in late July. Weapons will be issued to AKI participants from the first four CRT courses conducted in 2003 and 2004. All previously trained CRT GAULAs will be issued weapons and equipment by the end of summer 2005. In the future, all CRT participants will receive their weapons and equipment at the completion of the course.

17. (U) Mr. Delphin "Tuffy" Von Brieson, a former DEA special agent, was selected as the new Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) AKI program manager. Mr. Victor De Windt, a former DSS special agent, was selected as the new AKI CRT course manager. RSO Mark Hunter departed Post on PCS travel on May 18. Acting RSO Mike French will be the POC for the ATA AKI program.

18. (U) VIP Personal Protection Training (PPT) Program: Twenty-four officials from the Mayor of Bogota's protective detail graduated from the latest PPT course on April 8. The next course will be conducted at the DAS Officers Academy from May 2 - 13. Instructors Tom Dorsch and Mary Beth Wilkas will leave the PPT Program on May 29 and return on contracts over the next year. In an effort to downsize to three instructor positions, only Mr. Dorsch's position will be filled. Future training will be focused on the President's and Vice President's protective details, while the instructors will continue to advise the Mayor's protective detail.

USAID

19. (U) Contributions from USAID and PRM of US\$6.3 million leveraged US\$13.2 million from the GOC to integrate humanitarian assistance and economic support projects for nearly 20,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). Awarded to USG grantee, Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) International, these funds will serve to expand PRM's emergency humanitarian assistance projects from 14 to 21 cities. The funds will cover almost 100 percent of the demand for aid to displaced families to date this year and will strengthen USAID's economic support activities in Barranquilla, Bogota, Buenaventura, Cali, Santa Marta and most of the coffee-producing provinces (the "Eje Cafetero").

110. (U) USAID's Office of Food for Peace approved a contribution of 4,570 metric tons of Title II emergency commodities to meet immediate nutrition needs for roughly 110,000 IDPs. The assistance, valued at US \$3.5 million, was granted to World Food Program's (WFP) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) program in Colombia. WFP will provide food rations to IDPs as they transition to greater self-sufficiency. Distributions will cover the first six months of displacement -- the most critical period for IDPs. Commodities (e.g., rice, lentils and vegetable oil) are expected to arrive in Colombia in late-July or early-August 2005.

111. (U) To help prepare Colombia for the transition to an oral, accusatorial justice system, USAID has designed, constructed and delivered 35 specialized oral court rooms and

trained over 1,659 criminal justice system operators in oral procedures required by the new system, including public defenders, inspectors, judges, and law professors. Only 100 days after implementing the new accusatory justice system in pilot jurisdictions in Bogota, Manizales, Pereira and Armenia, statistics are showing improvements. Police are making fewer frivolous arrests; scarce court, prosecutor and public defender resources are being focused on more serious crimes; out of 10,543 pre-trial negotiations, 8,273 (78.5%) ended in a settlement; and nearly 76% of the 2,943 cases arraigned in the first 100 days were plea-bargained. Cases that have been settled and arraigned will not require costly and time-consuming trials.

WOOD